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COUNCIL FOR LEADERS IN ALABAMA SCHOOLS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWS IN EDUCATION

KARLA LATHAM BLOUNT COUNTY SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO THE SUPERINTENDENT SELECTED AS ALABAMA'S SECRETARY OF THE YEAR

Birmingham, AL, December 5, 2018: The Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools (CLAS) and Simbli by eBOARDsolutions, the Secretary of the Year award sponsor, are proud to announce the selection of Mrs. Karla Latham as the 2018 Secretary of the Year. Mrs. Latham was selected from among 8 district finalists across the state of Alabama.

Latham is the administrative assistant to the Superintendent of Blount County. She works with the superintendent and board of education to serve the 7,526 students and 900 employees of the Blount County School System.

Dr. Stoney Beavers who nominated Latham for the award, said "Mrs. Latham is a cornerstone of stability within our office, and everyone throughout the system knows and respects her for her commitment to our schools and school system. Mrs. Latham works daily with school personnel and the communities of Blount County. She finds ways to recognize employees, community members, and students at Board meetings and other special functions. In everything she does, she is always polite, courteous, and professional. She serves others with a smile on her face and with a heart for everyone in the school system."

In addition to her many duties as the administrative assistant to the Superintendent, Latham has attended over 100 hours of training in the past years. For example, she took a photography class at Wallace State to improve her photography skills which promote Blount County Schools' activities through photos used for social media and the school system's website. She works hard to understand new technologies used for Board meetings, and she seeks out additional training from Google and notification platforms in order to better serve office staff.

Latham is a Board member of the local Children's Advocacy Center to promote awareness of child abuse and has helped create strong partnerships with the Children's Advocacy Center and other community organizations, too.

This past year Latham had surgery to remove a tumor from her neck followed by days of chemotherapy. Through all the trials that came with surgery and treatments Latham

continued to excel at her job and maintained her focus on the needs of others in the office and community to ensure the very best education possible for Blount County students.

"Mrs. Latham's selection as the Alabama Secretary of the Year is a testament to the hard work and dedication she puts in on a daily basis to provide the best for Blount County schools," stated Dr. Vic Wilson, CLAS Executive Director

The Chief Operating Officer of eBOARDsolutions, Mark Willis, said "eBOARDsolutions is proud to be the sponsor for the 2018 Alabama Secretary of the Year Award. We know what a vital role the secretary plays in helping the board and superintendent to effectively lead their district. While their daily contributions are often behind the scenes, we know that they are a key part of the leadership team that helps move the district forward to serve their students."

Nominations for this award were submitted by CLAS members in each State Board of Education District. Each finalist is held in high regard by her employer as well as by her co-workers, and community. Other Secretary of the Year finalists include Jamie Paul, Baldwin County; Toni Jones, Tallassee City; Elizabeth Fairley-Bromley, Jefferson County; Pearl Adams, Marengo County; Sandra Vernon, Trussville City; and Debbie Fanning, Madison County. Each of these secretaries does an outstanding job and deserves the recognition through this award.

About the Award: This is the first year the Secretary of the Year award has been given. The award is given to one Alabama school secretary or administrative assistant who supports the vision, mission, goals, and beliefs of the school system; promotes goodwill among co-workers; provides excellent customer service, demonstrates a good work ethic; performs work duties as assigned in an exemplary manner, and participates in professional learning in order to improve work knowledge and skills. The award is given at the annual Secretaries Conference Luncheon held in December.

About CLAS: CLAS, the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools was founded in 1969 by a small group of school leaders to provide targeted professional development and support for Alabama's public school administrators. CLAS now serves ten affiliates representing each type of public school/school system leader. CLAS provides the framework to connect dedicated school administrators and other successful leaders with a network for professional growth and support. CLAS is the premier professional development provider for administrators in public schools in the state of Alabama. www.clasleaders.org

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Photo: [Download Photo](#) L-R: Dr. Vic Wilson, CLAS Executive Director; Charlie Rigby representing eBOARDsolutions; Mrs. Karla Latham; and Dr. Suzanne Freeman representing eBOARDsolutions.